



V I E T N A M

TRAVERSING THE TERRITORY OF THE RED RIVER DELTA

ETH Studio Basel is investigating processes of urban transformation of territories – areas extending beyond the traditional urban cores and metropolitan centers. Previous projects in Egypt, Italy and Florida have shown that, under penetrating globalization, ever increasing movement of people and explosive population growth, once rural territories transform into novel landscapes. Such places attain a density of functions and complex meanings as vital as cities (and deserving the same analytical probing constantly applied to cities) while at the same time being characterized by very different, specific logics of territorial appropriation.

Following China, the Communist Republic of Vietnam introduces reforms allowing a form of market economy, releasing a pressurized valve in the economic machinery of South East Asia. Private development and government ambitions are reshaping the flat, watery Delta. Aggressive climate and an intense recent history pre-condition all processes here, the logics of which we will discover through the lense of urban practices, cartography and statistics, as well as a photodocumentary approach, in the aim to comprehensively describe the different modes of spatial occupation and transformation within the Red River Delta.

Two weeks of fieldwork in Northern Vietnam will be integral to the work. We will travel through the Delta starting from Hanoi and it's environs, to the port city of Hai Phong, the industrial parks along the interconnecting highway, and the adjacent UNESCO protected Ha Long Bay area, allthwhile discovering the specific balance of settlements and agriculture, the intricate and omnipresent water systems, protected reserves enjoyed once by the French colonials, cascaded mining landscapes and much more.

ETH Studio Basel: Prof. Roger Diener, Prof. Marcel Meili, Mathias Gunz, Rolf Jenni, Christian Mueller Inderbitzin, Vesna Jovanovic

Exercise type: E (Entwurf) with P (Planung); Group work in Basel and in research location

Start: Tuesday, 22nd February 2012, 10.00am, ETH Studio Basel, Spitalstrasse 8, 4056 Basel

Fieldtrip: 17th March-4th April 2012; participation is obligatory; costs: 1500 SFr.

Special requirement: biometric passport (e-passport), visa for Vietnam

Collaborators: University of Civil Engineering, Hanoi

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